

WILLAMETTE FARMER.

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During these Hard Times the tendency to re-trench is very strong and very proper. Let the farmer ask himself, however, if he can afford to dispense with the only journal in the State that belongs to him and represents his interests! Thirteen years ago we purchased the WILLAMETTE FARMER and invested in it all our means and the best years of several lives. Consider, friends, whether it is not more reasonable at this time, (when you know how hard the times must pinch the publisher of your own journal) to go out and collect a small club of new subscribers at the low price offered rather than think of "economizing" by doing without the services of a friend of such long standing.

Correspondence.

Mortgage Tax Talk.

SILVERTON, Or., Jan. 5, 1885.

Editor Willamette Farmer: Permit me to answer your views on the mortgage tax law. You say to tax money fairly is well, but it should not be at its face, while other property is not assessed at over one-third its face. What is the face value of land? is it what the farmer can get for it when he wants to sell it, or is it what he thinks it is worth? After all, is it not just what it will bring at Sheriff sale at the time a man wants to sell? Apply it to farm produce and you have it. What is wheat and potatoes worth? What will farms rent for cash rent, one year with another the country over? Does not experience teach that it will take the rent to pay the tax on it? Is one farm as good as another the country over? Will one acre of land produce the same each year, with the same cultivation? Will the crop bring the same price each year? (To say nothing about the smiles of heaven.) Can a man produce a crop without an outlay of capital and labor? How is it with money? Is not one twenty dollar piece as good as another anywhere? Will it not bring its interest one year with another without labor on the part of the lender? Will it take all of the interest to pay the tax on the principal? Certainly not. Then where-in is the injustice done to money?

Friend Clarke, give yourself no uneasiness, the money lender wouldn't have your farm. How is it with our sons. When we give them a farm already improved—they only just barely make a living, and pay their taxes, and many of them don't do that.

Again you say so many evade the law that it is only operative with truly honest men and many such doesn't loan money. In that I believe you are correct. The money lenders have been per-juring themselves, else they would not have complained at the mortgage tax law. I do not think it right to legislate in behalf of liars, to give them their own way, but let us establish a reward for virtue. Young America is extravagant enough now. What would be if the rate of interest was lower and the country flooded with money. If there is any exemption made I think it should be in favor of the producer, for land is already assessed too high. When the snow storms comes the farmer is in trouble, but the mortgage is all right; when hard times comes money has a faculty of hiding itself, but the land is always in sight.

When our Legislature reduced the rate of interest from 10 to 12 per cent. the money lenders all over the country opposed the law and said they would not abide by it. What have they done to evade the law? They have organized broker shops and collected in all of the loose money from among the farmers for fear that they would be simple enough to loan it to their fellow farmers at 10 per cent. and thus relieve them of their embarrassments. Now when a farmer wants to borrow money he has to go to one of these fellows to get it for him, and he tells him that there is not any money—that the mortgage tax law has driven it all out of the country and that you farmers are to blame for it, but in a few days he informs him, (that is if he is good for it), that he can get the money for him, providing he will pay him so much. Now if such an evasion

of the law as this is permitted, what may we not reasonably expect by and by. I think that money ought to be taxed at its face and I believe the mortgage tax law is a good one because it does it. Yours truly, MATHEW SMALL.

Setting Hens and their Management.

SALEM, Or., Dec. 29, 1884.

Editor Willamette Farmer: Permit me to say that the brief paragraph, in a late number of your paper, concerning hens that wont set does these useful birds great injustice, at any rate it is so according to my experience, which in regard to the care and management of fowls has not been of small extent. I have never found it necessary to keep a hen, wanting to set, confined longer than to the fourth day; and if occasion demands I put three or four in together. I use an open slatted coop, slatted on the top as well as on the sides and ends, and usually about four feet high, three feet long and two feet wide with two or three slats across, placed inside on which the fowls can roost. I place the coop on the ground and under an open shed, feed and water the hen or hens confined in it as regularly as the other fowls and furnish ashes or dust for them to bathe in. This is all, except that the coop must be kept neat. Indeed, in the case of fowls under any circumstances, cleanliness is alike essential to the creatures comfort and their owners profit. These two things go together and cannot be separated without injury. For that matter it may be as well remembered that the same principle is applicable in the case of all creatures given into the hand of man for his use.

And here I am reminded that I saw in a late number of the Statesman an article in which it was stated that a creature, whom the reporter styled a man, if my memory serves me rightly, had unmercifully abused a horse by beating him over the head with a piece of timber until he succeeded in knocking it down, and then kicked it until he caused it to arise. I wondered why some humane person did not interpose to prevent such low-bred, fiendish cruelty; or if that was impracticable, why did they not have this "thing of evil" arrested. Every citizen should certainly understand that even here, in far off Oregon, there is a law forbidding cruelty to animals. It has been said by one renowned for his wisdom, "that a righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." Cruelty is a sure evidence of cowardice. Such are to be pitied; for it has been said by one wiser than Solomon, that with what measure you mete it shall be measured to you again. DAMARIS.

Chufa for Hogs.

A correspondent from Dallas asks what chufa is? And the very next mail brought us an answer to his question from a reader at Dayton, W. T. So we appended the letter and the clipping referred to. It seems chufa is a nut that grows in the ground in the Southern States. We trust Mr. Fuller will answer more fully and give us the benefit of his experience and experiment.

DAYTON, W. T., Jan. 17, 1885.

Editor Willamette Farmer: Enclosed find a slip cut from the "Home and Farm" published at Louisville Ky. recommending the chufa for hog feed. I raised a few of the ground nuts in Iowa and have no doubt there is money in them. If possible I mean to try them here.

Snow is six inches and more coming.
H. FULLER.

I regret very much that so few of our farmers have found the value and economy of ground-peas, field-peas, potatoes, and chufas—the last of which is worth them all. I know from experience at home and observation of others, that the chufas have been a source of great economy than any other hog food we can plant. With it I can raise meat at from three to five cent per pound, not feeding any corn at all to my

hogs. It is superior to anything we can plant for fattening faster, superior for making meat sweeter, and for economy, as hogs eat every one they can find before they touch anything else. They save time and labor by not being any more trouble to cultivate than the same number of acres in cotton, and save money by producing more on same land than anything else we can plant or raise on a farm.

If we farmers would take our old, worn out lands and utilize them, as well as improve, by planting chufas, raising our hog food at little expense and little trouble, making large hogs and fat hogs, it would not be many years before we would be an independent people, raise our own "hog and hominy" at home, and cut off that dread expense of raising cotton with which to buy meat. Cotton then would be a surplus crop and would demand a price that would more than compensate for its scarcity. This is what we need in the Southern States.

Some of our farmers are somewhat afraid of chufas, because they have the mistaken idea, that the nut-grass and chufa are the same. I have seen both, and have planted the chufa for the past seven years, and I know from observing the one and having a daily experience with the other, that they are as different as the bitter crab is from the most delicious sweet apple of our orchards; nor are they a nuisance as the nut-grass is. Some reason that as they both come under the same botanical family, they are the same; that as the nut-grass is a grass and the chufa is a grass, therefore the chufa is the nut-grass. We had as well advance the argument that as a man is an animal, and a mule is an animal, therefore a man is a mule.

I hope all our farmer will soon commence raising this food for hogs—raise large hogs and fat hogs, raise them cheaper and with less trouble. If with the chufa we can raise hogs at so little cost and so little trouble, then I say that every year we postpone it we lose time, labor, and money. It might well be called the poor man's friend.

Fence or no Fence.

COTTAGE GROVE, Jan. 12, 1882.

Editor Willamette Farmer: I see an editorial in the last FARMER, JANUARY, 9, on the above subject. In which you seem to favor a compromise or a kind of a half fence and to compel the owners of stock, to take care of their stock as they became to wise to heed such a fence. Now a poor fence is just the thing to make "breechy" stock, so the law should require every man to keep his own crop safe from all stock that has not already been spoiled. Or the law should require every man to keep his stock off of his neighbors land so that each person could fence or herd just as he might choose. But the standard for a lawful fence, should be high and strong enough to insure against any unspoiled stock and of such a character as not to injure stock.

The law ought also to compel men to provide shelter and food for their stock where nature does not furnish it. A man that drives stock out on to a bleak plain where he knows that it is liable to perish for want of food and shelter and fails to furnish such food and shelter, should be punished for cruelty to animals. J. P. TAYLOR.

Rhubarb or Pie Plant.

SALEM, Or., Jan. 13, 1885.

Editor Willamette Farmer: This the best substitute for fruit we have at the time of year when it is fit for use. In this vicinity, growing in the open ground, it can be gathered from the later part of March till August but not much is used after the small fruits are ready to use. It is very healthy as well as palatable and coming at time of the year when fruit of all kinds is scarce is very desirable. It is very easily grown. There is no danger of getting the soil too rich, the richer it is the finer the pie-

plant will be. Plants over two years old from the seed are the best to set, if these can not be procured, then get a package of seed, and raise the plants and when of the proper age set them where they are to stand, set in the fall or rather during the winter in January or February. They start to grow very early and it is better to have them set out before they start their growth. Any time now is a good time to set the plants and the most people have more time to attend to it now than later in the year when other work is crowding. After the plants stand in the bed five or six years they should be taken up and divided into four or five parts and reset putting but one piece of course in a place. By using a little care and manure every year, every one who has a little land at his disposal can furnish his table with all the sauce and pie material of this kind he desires. Try it and see.

DEXTER FIELD.

Letter from Whitman County.

COLFAX, W. T., Dec. 23, 1884.

Editor Willamette Farmer: Times are hard in this neck of the woods, not that produce is scarce, but so very low. If our crops had not been so heavy I don't think we could have pulled through. I, myself alone with only one span of horses threshed 1,900 bushels of grain. Wheat went 45 bushels to the acre and oats 78. If you have any one in the valley that can beat that I would like to hear of it. When I farmed in Marion county it would take three acres to raise this amount. If there is any one in the valley who doubt the figures I will give them the names of the county officers of Whitman county as references. If we could only get the price the farmers get at Salem, Oregon, for our produce here we could make a good living and save a little money for a rainy day. Timber is our greatest drawback in this country. As soon as we farmers get through sceding we commence hauling wood and keep it up all summer long.

Yours truly, J. H. McTHER.

Information wanted in Sugar Beet Growing.

ONION PEAK, Jan. 8, 1884.

Editor Willamette Farmer: As we desire to make some experiments with the sugar beet the coming season I would like to ask through the columns of the FARMER for the process of converting the juice of the beet into syrup or in other words, how is the syrup made not to taste of the beet?

H. V. ALLEY.

Repeal of Land Laws.

WASHINGTON, January 13.—The bill to repeal the pre-emption of desert land and timber culture laws and amend the homestead law has passed the Senate. The first section provides for the repeal of the pre-emption law. The repeal, however, is not to affect the rights of any person which are accruing on the passage of the act. It further provides that any person who has not heretofore had the benefit of the pre-emption law, and who has failed from any cause to perfect his title to land theretofore entered by him under the homestead law, may make a second homestead entry in lieu of the pre-emption privilege which is repealed. Section 2 repeals the timber culture law with a proviso that it shall not interfere with any existing rights. Section 3 amends the revised statutes so that all persons who have availed themselves of the homestead law may pay a minimum price for lands from eighteen months from entry, provided they file preliminary notice six months before. Section 4 repeals the desert land act, except as to claims which exist at the date of the passage of the act. Section 5 provides that no public lands except abandoned military or other reservations of mineral lands and other lands, the sale of which has been authorized by special act of Congress, shall be sold at public auction, or by special private entry. All offered public lands are withdrawn from market and shall be disposed of as unoffered public lands.

From Wasco County.

Mr. Sol. Durbin whose stock ranch is on Rock Creek, ten miles south of Alkali, came down this week for a short stay in his old home and purchase a couple of first class draft Stallions for their horse ranch. They have several hundred head of cattle, over four hundred good horses and eight thousand sheep. The sheep ranch is on Antelope, in Wasco county south-west ninety miles from Rock Creek. As to losses by winter he thinks they may lose a thousand sheep as they had one band of eleven hundred that were caught away from feed and they found it impossible to drive them though they made a fairly good road with teams; they were without feed for three weeks. Altogether he thinks their losses of stock will not be more than five per cent. and of sheep not over ten per cent. They had enough feed to answer their purpose if it could have been made available. Mr. Durbin thinks that losses of stock through that part of Oregon will not be very heavy and considering the severity of the winter stock men have escaped remarkably. The snow there was light and fleecy and the cold was dry and still, so that neither stock or people suffered as they did in Western Oregon at the same temperature. The climate there is very different from the raw air that makes winter dreaded with us, for which we have had more than usual for some time past.

Oiling and Care of Harness.

A correspondent of the Country Gentleman furnishes the following practical suggestions:

Our farmers are prudent in buying harness, demanding the best leather, the best work, etc., but they put the harness in use and allow it to be exposed to all kinds of weather without further care, and in a very few years it is ripped, dried and cracked, and almost worthless. Then the harness maker has to take all the blame. The careful farmer will have a good place to hang his harness where it may hang up straight and away from the gas of the manure. One man will oil his harness only in hot weather with some cheap fish-oil; then hang it in the sun to dry, when done, it is no better than before.

I have owned a tan-yard, harness-shop and shoe-shop, and claim to understand the principles of making and pressing leather. Now, to oil harness properly, in early spring, before spring work begins, take it into a damp cellar, or some damp cool room; take it apart, soak well in a tub of warm water, and with a coarse rag and old knife rasp off all gum and dirt. As soon as the outside is dried a little, put on with a rag or brush as much oil as will stick to it, and place all in a heap on a board to dry; if one coat is not enough, go over it again till filled with oil; then when all dried in, take warm water and castile soap and rag, wash well and put together. Castor oil is best of all; good neatsfoot oil is very good, in which use enough lamp-black to color well. After being exposed to a soaking rain, the harness should be rubbed over with a rag and good oil while wet. Never expose leather to a hot sun or drying winds till after oiling or the oil will do harm rather than good. Harness, well treated in this way, will be soft pliable, less liable to chafe or rub off the hair of the horse, and last some years longer than if neglected.

Feeding Corn to Cattle a Success.

The experiment of feeding corn to fatten cattle in Eastern Oregon, is a success as is proved by the following from the Oregonian.

The 400 head of beef cattle, belonging to A. H. Johnson, which are being fed on corn at Blalocks, are reported as doing well. About ten tons of corn is fed to them daily, being spread around on the snow which is trampled down hard. They rush around and gobble up the ears of corn first, and then eat up the blades and stalks quite clear. The prospect is good for Mr. Johnson to make a winning on his experiment in corn-feeding cattle.

WE WISH our friends would take an interest in our welfare and send us one new subscriber with their own renewal. We don't want to lose any subscribers if the times are hard, and by each one sending us one or more new names our list will be increased.